

# Music and Image/ Image and Music: the Creation and Meaning of Visual-Aural Force Fields in the Later Middle Ages

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**Music and Image/ Image and Music:  
the Creation and Meaning of Visual-Aural Force Fields  
in the Later Middle Ages**

**By Andrew Kirkman and Philip Weller**

In one sense this article is not really about music. In another sense, though, it is all about music; or, rather, music's silent presence will infuse everything that we shall be discussing. What we shall attempt is a preliminary suggestion of some meanings of late medieval music in the context of the kinds of fixed images with which it habitually interacted in its original spaces and venues. It is of course a truism that essential aspects of the originally perceived meanings of music and images are lost when they are experienced in isolation, shorn of their enriching contexts. What is arguably less fully appreciated, however, is the extent of loss concerning not only the synergy of the combined, multisensory experience, but also the meaning – or power-to-mean – of each medium in and of itself.

As a platform for an understanding of the examples that will follow, it is important briefly to consider some general circumstances – likely more or less familiar – that have traditionally stood in the way of a fuller appreciation of the significance in tandem of fixed images and music. First among these – and leaving aside for now the loss of the socio-cultural contexts in which they operated and to whose structures they gave meaning – is the evident difficulty of reconstructing any transient experiences of the past with confidence. Second is the 'museumification' of objects like paintings, sculptures, manuscripts and

liturgical materials, by which they have mostly been removed from the surroundings they were fashioned to occupy and to whose functioning they contributed. Third is the fact that performance of devotional music of the period is today usually far removed from ritual or devotional settings; and fourth is the institutionalisation of academia, which by its compartmentalised nature has tended to discourage truly multimedia forms of enquiry, appreciation, reconstruction, and performance.

The ground is currently shifting on all these fronts. Liturgical (re)enactments of the kind that were central to the recently completed project, conducted under the auspices of the Arts and Humanities Research Council, of ‘The Experience of Worship’ bring us valuable insights into the psychological impact of such aural-visual experience.<sup>i</sup> More broadly propitious are the various initiatives emerging from possibilities afforded by digital technology. The digital reconstruction of the Sainte-Chapelle of Dijon recently produced by a group of researchers at the Centre d’études supérieures de la Renaissance in Tours offers an example of how even lost buildings, together with the rituals and music they fostered, can to at least some degree be reclaimed from oblivion.<sup>ii</sup>

Our own particular focus is on the coexistence and interaction, in practice, of late medieval English devotional music and contemporary Midlands alabasters, the substance of an incipient research project in partnership between the Universities of Birmingham and Nottingham, and two art galleries: the Burrell Collection in Glasgow and Nottingham Castle Museum. The international impact of alabaster figures and altarpieces, produced in prodigious quantities and

exported throughout the Christian world during the long fifteenth century, remains underappreciated, though surviving examples can be seen in museums throughout Europe and beyond. Hence, their circulation had much in common with the exactly coeval international circulation of English music, famously one of the driving forces of European polyphony at that time. This phenomenon of strong cultural transmission in two arts coevally, in parallel, demands wider appreciation and scrutiny, as well as wider and more detailed contextualisation. Besides their contemporaneity, these two artistic traditions – respectively fixed and evanescent – were fashioned to interact within the same kinds of ritual and devotional settings not only in insular settings, but across the length and breadth of Europe.<sup>iii</sup>

Alabasters were made for both public and private purposes, and in both small- and large-scale formats of various kinds. Part of the enormous attraction of the alabaster corpus is precisely that the examples we have, though hugely reduced in number by comparison with what once existed, appear to speak to a range of contexts and sensibilities both private and public, potentially joining together the inner, spiritual and outer, physical worlds – the interiority of the private individual, and the wider, collective realm of ritual and shared experience through shared performance. Even some of the surviving freestone screens in medieval cathedrals, such as the famous Neville Screen at Durham (consecrated in 1380), probably once held a splendid array of alabaster statues. Thus we may summarise: formal reredoses, altarpieces, cultic statues, smaller individual panels or framed diptychs, all had their place within the spectrum of religious

imagery of their time; and the range of interactions with liturgy, devotions and music (both chant and polyphony) would have been correspondingly wide.<sup>iv</sup>

Underlying each of the two research projects mentioned above is a shared interest in the wider dimensions of material and performance culture – for example, in the ways in which the play of light and sound could ‘energize’ attendant objects and the spaces that contained them, thus sharpening our awareness and understanding of the historically specific meanings of medieval devotion, its multisensory environment and expressive media. Space and fixed images are enlivened by time and human action, by purposive movement and shifts of perspective, by the smells of candles and other burning offerings, by spoken or declaimed words, and of course by music.

From the viewpoint of alabasters and other fixed images, our efforts focus on exploring the performative role of images as vivified, or enacted, through ritual and its attendant sounds, and on the ways in which a devotional image ‘enlivened’ – within a particular setting – by ritual, words and music, could become the centre of a broader, synergic field of meaning. Ritual, with its attendant music, had the power to effect a ‘charged space’ of signification, potent with a potential to extend itself imaginatively and then transcendently beyond the merely symbolic to embrace the other-worldly.

The Late Middle Ages was the period of the intense, contemplative gaze, which revealed to the meditating viewer a glimpse of a profound spiritual meaning beneath material reality. The effect, ideally, was one not of deciphering a riddle,

but of witnessing the contemplated image spontaneously transform itself. In the words of John L. Ward, the aim was: 'to create an expressive effect of revelation and transcendence during the process of meditation.'<sup>v</sup> Such images exist in order to be coaxed into life in response to appropriate kinds of attentiveness, and thereby to yield personal spiritual experience. To explore this notion we shall first take some examples from a group of images that, if in a different medium, are not a million miles from alabaster sculpture in date and above all in cultural usage: the panel paintings of Jan van Eyck (ca. 1390 – 1441).

**Insert plate 1 here**

**Plate 1: Virgin and Child in a Church, c.1390-1441 (oil on panel), Eyck, Jan van (c.1390-1441) / Staatliche Gemaldegalerie, Berlin, Germany**

**Insert plate 2 here**

**Plate 2: Detail of Virgin and Child in a Church, c.1390-1441 (oil on panel), Eyck, Jan van (c.1390-1441) / Staatliche Gemaldegalerie, Berlin, Germany**

Plate 1 shows Van Eyck's famous Berlin *Madonna in a Church*. Millard Meiss drew attention to the relationship between the sculpture of the Virgin and Child in a niche of the rood screen (see the detail in plate 2) and the similarly posed Virgin and Child that fills the church space, pointing out that 'as we contemplate these two figures in the shadowy interior we seem to witness a miracle of animation, a statue come alive.'<sup>vi</sup> Glossing on this observation, Ward has noted that the presence of the 'two sculptural types, one monochrome and the other colour, in itself encourages the notion of transformation, as does the more animated stance of the foreground Virgin.'<sup>vii</sup> This notion gains weight from the likelihood that, as has been variously surmised, the surviving panel originally

comprised one side of a diptych.<sup>viii</sup> Among the reasons for this supposition is the stance of the existing panel, which seems, in its oblique setting, to imply balance with a missing wing to the right. The Madonna herself is set slightly to the right, with her eyes directed off in the same direction, plausibly – as in many surviving diptychs – towards a donor in the now-missing right panel. The same conclusion is strongly supported by two copies of the Van Eyck, which do indeed have pendant donor panels.<sup>ix</sup> In such a scenario the donor on the now missing companion panel would have ‘witnessed’ his vision coming to life.

**Insert plate 3 here**

**Plate 3: The Rolin Madonna (La Vierge au Chancelier Rolin), c.1435 (panel), Eyck, Jan van (c.1390-1441) / Louvre, Paris, France**

Ward makes the same point concerning the Louvre *Virgin with Chancellor Rolin* (plate 3). According to his reading, Rolin would have been praying not before a corporeal presence, but before a vision of the Virgin. The point is emphasised by the fact that the grouping assumes the traditional – sculptural – pose of the *sedes sapientiae*, which Rolin may be contemplating via an actual image or one, presumably familiar to him, conjured up by his mind’s eye. Like so many donors in similar poses, Rolin is reading, and because this is a panel by Van Eyck there is of course no shortage of speculation as to precisely *what* he is reading. A strong candidate is the verbal mélange embroidered on the hem of the Virgin’s gown, comprising phrases from the psalms and lessons from Matins of the Little Office of the Virgin. From here it is but a short step to suggest that the Virgin and Child would be the image that came to mind as Rolin read the same words from his open book.<sup>x</sup> The implication, therefore, is that in such a devotional climate a

static image could embody something dynamic, a dynamism that could be achieved by the devout individual, furthermore, by contemplation, whether stimulated by a sculptural image, ritual texts, or imagination fired by known images of the same general type.

Insert plate 4 here

**Plate 4: Madonna and Child with Canon Joris van der Paele, 1436 (oil on panel), Eyck, Jan van (c.1390-1441) / Groeningemuseum, Bruges, Belgium**

Insert plate 5 here

**Plate 5: Detail of Madonna and Child with Canon Joris van der Paele, 1436 (oil on panel), Eyck, Jan van (c.1390-1441) / Groeningemuseum, Bruges, Belgium**

A further step in the devotional 'chain' may be read into the image presented as plate 4, the scarcely less familiar *Van der Paele Madonna*. Here the eponymous and likewise reading canon seems famously on the verge of dropping his spectacles in wonder at the image (conjured up?) before him. Craig Harbison has plausibly suggested that the canon, while still living, kept the panel in his lodgings to stimulate his devotions, transferring it, as demonstrably happened in analogous cases, to a ritual and memorial context to serve as his funerary monument following his demise.<sup>xi</sup> For present purposes, though, a point of particular interest concerns the detail in plate 5 of the shield of Van der Paele's patron Saint George, which, as Ward again notes, reflects a figure, surely the artist himself. By propulsion out from the panel, then, 'Van Eyck includes himself and [his] viewers in the [gift of] salvation extended to the donor.'<sup>xii</sup> Thus the specificity of the image's private, original nature is opened out into the wider context of the viewing public and their spiritual needs and aspirations. This



much more public role for the image potentially embraces text, memory and music, whether actual or remembered, within its now much more public space and ambit.

Insert plate 6 here

**Plate 6: Detail of Codex Vindobonensis 1857, fol.14v Mary of Burgundy at prayer, from 'The Hours of Mary of Burgundy', c.1475 (vellum), French School, (15th century) / Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, Austria**

As one final (painted) image in this line, we would like to draw attention to another, if anything even more familiar depiction. Plate 6, from the *Hours of Mary of Burgundy*, makes the point articulated above as literally as could be desired. Here we eavesdrop on the Duchess absorbed in the prescribed meditations of her (again open) book of hours, while the window at which she sits frames what is clearly her conjured vision of the Virgin and Child in a church interior, the Duchess herself kneeling at her side (so the Duchess actually appears twice). In such images, as Harbison notes, 'fifteenth-century men and women are shown so fervently engaged in their own prayers that the subject of their devotions, whether it be the Virgin or an event from Christ's life, stands before them or indeed surrounds them.'<sup>xiii</sup>

The witnesses above are of course all people of learning and status, and, crucially, literate. Indeed one might suggest that reading is in such instances itself a depictive device to suggest, metaphorically, the transformative power of imagination. But in fact none of this actually requires great learning: on the contrary, there are good contemporary grounds for suggesting that the salvific

power of spiritual contemplation may have been enhanced by its absence. As Harbison notes, the devotional handbooks that proliferated at the time responded to a need not for erudition but for simple devotional guidance for the literate and, via priestly mediation, illiterate population. And just as the prayers of the poor assumed a special power of advocacy in private ritual enactments, so 'learned ignorance' carried an uncluttered efficacy in enlisting the intercessory powers of saints. He goes on to observe how, via the principle of 'docta ignorantia,' Nicholas of Cusa promoted the notion that the advocacy of simple lay piety surpassed that of the learning of a confessor. In a similar vein, an epithet copied on the binding of a Saint-Omer document admonishes that 'it is better to have holy rusticity than eloquent sinning.'<sup>xiv</sup> In other words the effectiveness of prayer depended on the power of simple piety and imagination rather than that of elegant disputation.

Along with 'learned ignorance' we encounter the notion of 'compassionate vision.' Devotional treatises repeatedly encouraged the devout to focus their attention in order actually to be 'present' at certain moments in Christ's life and the martyrdom of saints, and to share in their suffering. In the case of images, this was aided by complementary notions, originating in antiquity, that all material objects send out physical 'species' that make corresponding impressions on the substance and structure of the eye and of the brain, and that, conversely, the eye sends out visual rays that enable objects to be seen. Robert Grosseteste sought to explain the power of the object as one of emitting 'species' that leave an impression of 'similitude' on the eye and brain. Attempting to reconcile the contrary directions of travel, Roger Bacon, as Marla Carlson notes,

saw the thing perceived as 'physically present in (at least) two places: in the external world and in the receptive medium, whether that be air, skin, eye, the chamber of the brain, or a combination of these.'<sup>xv</sup> For Aquinas, similarly, the eye becomes 'like' that which it sees, just as wax conforms to the signet ring. In other words, to quote Carlson again,

Psychological states... are not subjective responses to a thing or situation, but originate in the objects themselves. For the medieval spectator watching a Passion play or gazing upon an image of the crucifixion, Jesus was physically present in the eye or in the brain; the same would be true for the depiction of a tormented saint; and the same would be true when the spectator later recalled that image to mind. Inner vision constitutes inner presence.<sup>xvi</sup>

Lodged thus in the brain, the meditative worshipper could perceive the object of devotion processively, as if being physically in its presence. Interiority and materiality are thus conjoined. Thus Julian of Norwich (1342 – 1416) dwells on the subtle changes in the colour of Christ's flesh as he dies on the cross:

I saw His swete face as it was drye and blodeles with pale deyeng, and sithen more pale, dede, langoring, and than turned more dede into blew, and sithen more browne blew, and the flesh turnyd more depe dede. For His passion shewid to me most properly in His blissid face, and namly in His lippis. There I saw these four colowres, tho that were aforne freshe, redy, and liking to my sigte. This was a swemful

chonge to sene, this depe deyeng, and also the nose clange and dried,  
to my sigte, and the swete body was brown and blak, al turnyd oute of  
faire lifely colowr of Hymselfe on to drye deyeng.<sup>xvii</sup>

Susan M. Arvey elaborates this point with reference to perhaps the period's most widely disseminated guide to spirituality, the late thirteenth-early fourteenth-century *Meditations on the Life of Christ* by the Franciscan John of Caulibus. The aim of the treatise, which was translated into many languages including a widely dispersed version in Middle English, is to engender closeness to Christ by conjuring detailed visions from his life, to the extent of being physically present and even involved in its events.<sup>xviii</sup> Awareness of this participatory mode of meditation reveals the potential depth of contemporary meaning of mystery plays, including the English N-town cycle, on which, Arvey notes, John's treatise was strongly influential. She traces further strands of its influence in the work of later mystics such as Richard Rolle and Margery Kempe and, crucially, in static visual representations, which thereby offered access to a newly tangible mode of meditative engagement.

Such a literalist mode of identification through an active imagination is not simply an end in itself, but can also be a stage *en route* to a more abstracted form of spiritual meditation since, as St Bernard of Clairvaux (1090 – 1153) observes, “the soul at prayer should have before it a sacred image of the God-man, in his birth or infancy or as he was teaching, or dying, or rising, or ascending” because “carnal men” are “unable to love in any other way [except] by first drawing them

to the salutary love of his own humanity, and then gradually to raise them to a spiritual love.”<sup>xix</sup>

There is also, to bring us back into the world of sacred alabasters, a distinctively English fifteenth-century tradition – following on from the vivid contemplations and spiritual exercises of such figures as Julian of Norwich and Margery Kempe, – of religious verse that invoked and played on similar tropes of identification and spiritual realisation. The tradition was a shared, open one, though the most eminent individual poetic examples are probably those provided by the – again unjustly neglected – John Lydgate of Bury (ca. 1370 – ca. 1451), a prolific exponent of religious lyric whose art has suffered from previous disparagement by literary historians. Lydgate, as an eminent clerical figure from a famous Benedictine monastery, and a man with royal and aristocratic connections, did not by any means neglect the humbler laity among his readership. His poem *The Testament of Johannes Lydgate*, for example, is cast in the form of words directed towards the reader from Christ himself, speaking directly from the Cross – therefore by extension from a physical image of the Crucifixion (the presence of the image being clearly invoked in the opening injunction to look upwards and behold Christ closely, and intimately. (See Plates 7 (a) and (b), both fifteenth-century alabaster Crucifixions):

Beholde, o man! lyft up thyn eye and see  
What mortall peyne I suffre for thi trespace.  
With pietous voys I crye and sey to the:  
Beholde my woundes, behold my bloody face,

Beholde the rebukes that do me so manace,  
Beholde my enemyes that do me so despice,  
And how that I, to reforme the to grace,  
Was like a lambe offred in sacryfice.<sup>xx</sup>

Here, the repetitions of 'Beholde' reinforce the sense of a visual and spatial context, and the active urgency of the viewer's meditative activity. Later on in the poem, Lydgate presses the point as Christ comes to an end of his tender admonishments to the reader/viewer, urging him or her to internalise their experience so as to be able to keep it fresh, thus preserving it as ever present: 'Emprente thes thynges in thyn inward thought,/ And grave hem depe in thy remembraunce;/ Thynke on hem, and forgete hem nowght...' The spiritual discipline is dependent on an active use of memory, and calls upon all the special physical and animating qualities of thought demanded of the contemplator.

Within such poetry, then, throughout the later fourteenth and on into the early sixteenth century, we can locate the pious imaginings of the devotional viewer, and so begin to understand the scenario for keenly visualised spiritual experience, while at the same time keeping open the idea of a larger, shared – and therefore public – space within which such experience could be accommodated. (In this connection we should naturally remember the strong tradition of private devotion and contemplation at Mass that again typifies the lay person's repertory of experience at this period.)

Against a background of such strongly and personally experienced identification with events in the lives of Christ and his saints, then, we can easily appreciate the appeal of alabaster figures, with their particular visual texture and surface, and their particular receptivity to paint. It is easy to imagine that the soft, translucent texture of alabaster, when enlivened by pigment, offered an especially propitious medium via which to engage in a processive way, through physical qualities reimagined spiritually, with the individuals and events depicted. Perhaps still more to the point is the question of lighting – it is easy to forget, in our age of stable and unremitting electric light, the vivifying effect within an enclosed space of shifting natural light, and especially of the irregular shimmer of candlelight.

But however much the fixed image might aspire, through the agency of deep contemplation, to a moving, living state, no temporal limitation restrains music, which was thus surely by its very nature the medium *par excellence* via which to accentuate and extend the perceived dynamism of fixed imagery. And just as the fixing of images in the memory could extend their devotional efficacy beyond the limits of their actual presence, so memory of music could have deepened private, silent contemplation before an image, or indeed in its (physical) absence. These points perhaps apply with particular force to alabaster figures that, at the cheaper, often mass-produced workshop end, offered personal access to devotional imagery for private individuals for whom it would otherwise have been financially out of reach. Private habits of contemplation would thus nourish and sustain the individual when (s)he returned to a public space or situation, in church, at Mass or at Vespers, at a funeral or obit ceremony, or wherever. What one would of course like to see is this same kind of *contemporary* discourse for

music, something that – at least to our knowledge – is lacking; but there can in any case be little doubt that music partook of the same ethos, hovering likewise, experientially, at the point of magic liminality between the tangible and the transcendent.

In all this, musical parallels are not slow to suggest themselves. Perhaps the most obvious concerns motets and Mass movements structured via isorhythm: the aural ‘revelation,’ through incrementally accelerated motion, of an underlying tenor melody (with its associated biblical or hagiographic significance) offers a direct parallel to the kind of revealed presence of a sacred being conjured, via meditation, by Chancellor Rolin and Canon van der Paele. We might also suggest that the depth of meditation would have been increased by repeated hearings, as facilitated by the daily repetitions of surviving motets, as has been proposed by Robert Nosow in the case of memorials in the Chapel Royal of Henry V.<sup>xxi</sup> Indeed it is easy to imagine that such repetition could have engendered the kind of progressively deepening and enriching contemplation specifically encouraged by contemporary meditative tracts.

The other obvious example is of course that of the particular *cantus firmi* of polyphonic Mass settings, sometimes likewise progressively ‘revealed’ by processive diminutions, but also, in a more general sense, engendering ever deeper engagement across the broader span of the parent ritual, again via repetition and the cumulative effect such repetition has – music here potentially reinforcing and intensifying the trajectory of liturgy from within, not merely being framed by it. Progressive revelation of this sort could in turn have steadily



deepened the theological appreciation of underlying meaning, or meanings, embedded in sacred works, or simply applied to them by usage in particular places under particular circumstances.

One thinks, for example, of the many possible meanings available to a *cantus firmus* like that of the English 'Caput' Mass (1440s),<sup>xxii</sup> whose underlying melody, heard twice in every movement under contrasting mensurations, could seep into the consciousness and develop there with repeated hearing whatever particular significances its circumstances encouraged or permitted, and whatever the specific intention of the Mass being celebrated. Moreover, every Mass setting of a borrowed melody naturally invites further contemplation of its interactions with the unchanging texts of the Mass Ordinary, which again can shift and develop with repetition and recontextualisation.

In the world of the motet, the focus for musical and visual interaction is just as significant, and potentially just as varied. Individual saints' feasts, patronal festivals, feast days with a primarily thematic or theological or commemorative significance, and above all the vast array of Marian liturgies and devotions of different sorts (including the votive antiphons famously sung before the cultic statue of the Virgin, or Virgin and Child, after Vespers and Compline in almost every church in one way or another, for which so much English polyphony survives (see Plates 8 (a) and (b), showing a standing Virgin and Child of ca. 1380 now in Nottingham, and a seated Virgin and Child of ca. 1450, known since 8 December, 1955 as Our Lady of Westminster, when it was formally enthroned in Westminster Cathedral to the sound of the Cathedral choir singing the *Salve*

*Regina*). More simply, even in a relatively humble parish church, lay familiarity with well-known plainchants, with polyphony improvised ‘on the book,’ or with an oft-reiterated piece of polyphony (perhaps of a relatively simple kind) performed repeatedly at a given liturgical or devotional juncture and in connection with a specific ritual image, could have had a similar impact on the attentive worshipper.

In light of this discussion one might also suspect, via calibrations in the pacing and mood of its ‘glossing’ and enriching counterpoints, composerly manipulation of the pace and profile of meditative engagement, perhaps even taking into account the imagined or envisaged effect of the intended physical setting, with its painted, carved or sculpted accoutrements and particular spatial layout. The notion of a progressively induced depth of meditation and identification might also help to shed interpretative light on the obviously summatory status of *Agnus dei* settings of various Masses, such as the *L’homme armé* cycles of Busnoys and Josquin. While such modes of perceptual and imaginative engagement may lack obvious technical or aesthetic demonstrability in contemporary writings, they nonetheless suggest new and fruitful modes of engagement, and a sense of approaching more closely the world to whose existential concerns they were once addressed, and to which they gave such eloquent expression.

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<sup>i</sup> <http://www.experienceofworship.org.uk/>

<sup>ii</sup> See, for example, the exhibition *La Sainte-Chapelle de Dijon et les Résidences des ducs de Bourgogne*, 17 May – 13 October 2014:

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<http://www.cesr.cnrs.fr/actualites/manifestations/exposition-la-sainte-chapelle-de-dijon> and <http://mba.dijon.fr/sainte-chapelle-dijon-et-residences-ducs-bourgogne>

iii The spread of surviving alabasters and the histories of their dissemination throughout Europe are not always all that well documented, certainly not as we might wish. But enough information is available to construct a plausible historical model, and more will turn up with further searching. Notable instances would have to include the documented gift of an English alabaster retable of St James the Greater to Santiago de Compostela, no less, in 1456; and an enormous reredos delivered from Nottingham for (probably) the high altar of St George's, Windsor, in 1367. See F. Cheetham, *English Medieval Alabasters* (Oxford, 1984; new edn. Woodbridge, 2005), pp.22 and p.16.

iv F. Cheetham, *Alabaster Images of Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 2003); and *Unearthed: Nottingham's Medieval Alabasters*, Essay and Exhibition Catalogue, ed. F. Cheetham, (Nottingham: Nottingham City Council, 2004).

v 'J. L. Ward, 'Disguised symbolism as enactive symbolism in Van Eyck's paintings,' *Artibus et Historiae* 15, No. 29 (1994), pp.9–53 at p.13.

vi M. Meiss, *The painter's choice: Problems in the interpretation of renaissance art*. (New York, 1976), p.13.

vii Ward, 'Disguised symbolism...', p.27.

viii E. Kittell, and M. Suydam, *The texture of society: Medieval women in the southern Low Countries: Women in medieval Flanders*. (London, 2004), p.212; C. Harbison, *The art of the northern Renaissance*. (London, 1995), p.98; E. Dhanens, *Hubert and Jan van Eyck*. (New York, 1980), p.325.

ix Jan Gossaert, *Virgin in the Church*, Rome, Galleria Doria Pamphilli; Master of 1499, *Madonna and Child with a Portrait of Abbot Christiaan de Hond*, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp.

x Ward, 'Disguised symbolism...', p.27-8.

xi 'C. Harbison, 'Visions and meditations in early Flemish painting,' *Simiolus: Netherlands*

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*Quarterly for the History of Art*, 15, No. 2 (1985), pp.87-118 at p.100.

<sup>xii</sup> Ward, 'Disguised symbolism...', p.44.

<sup>xiii</sup> Harbison, 'Visions and meditations ...', p.87.

<sup>xiv</sup> Harbison, 'Visions and meditations ...', p.88; Bibliothèque de Saint-Omer, II. G. 53, inside cover of binding: 'melius est habere sanctam rusticitatem quam eloquentiam peccatricem.'

<sup>xv</sup> M. Carlson, *Performing bodies in pain: Medieval and post-modern martyrs, mystics, and artists* (New York, 2010), pp.44-5. See also B. Newman, 'What did it mean to say "I saw"? The clash between theory and practice in medieval visionary culture,' *Speculum* 80, no. 1 (January, 2005), pp.1-43 at p.19-20.

<sup>xvi</sup> Carlson, *Performing bodies...*, p.45.

<sup>xvii</sup> Julian of Norwich, *The shewings of Julian of Norwich*, ed. G. R. Crampton, TEAMS Middle English Text Series (Kalamazoo, MI, 1993), chap. 16, 59. Quoted in S. M. Arvay, *Private passions: The contemplation of suffering in medieval affective devotions* (PhD diss., Rutgers U., 2008), p.87.

<sup>xviii</sup> '[I]f you wish to profit from all this, Sister, you must place yourself in the presence of whatever is related as having been said or done by the Lord Jesus, as if you were hearing it with your own ears and seeing it with your own eyes, giving it your total mental response," for "in this lies the full efficacy of these meditations.' (Quoted in S. M. Arvay, *Private passions...*, p.93.)

<sup>xix</sup> Quoted in. S. M. Arvay, *Private passions...*, p.92.

<sup>xx</sup> John Lydgate ooooooooooooo find that other edition This type of poem, written as direct speech (as a kind of *prosopopeia*) from the Cross, can famously be seen in the more formal, humanist-Latin *Huc me sydereo* text as set by Josquin, then by Willaert, Lasso and Jacobus Vaet (text by Maffeo Vegio, 1407 – 1458).

<sup>xxi</sup> R. Nosow, *Ritual Meanings in the Fifteenth-Century Motet* (Cambridge, 2012), pp.7-55.

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<sup>xxii</sup> For a consideration of the range of possible meanings see A. Kirkman, *The Cultural Life of the Early Polyphonic Mass* (Cambridge, 2010), pp.77-97.